Reviewer's report

Title: A one-year observational study of all hospitalized and fatal acute poisonings in Oslo: Epidemiology, intention and follow-up

Version: 1 Date: 7 June 2012

Reviewer: Annette Erlangsen

Reviewer's report:

The study is a descriptive assessment of incidences of persons hospitalized due to poisoning in Oslo, Norway. The main motivation for this was to monitor the development of ‘over the counter’ (OTC)-drugs impact on the incidence of paracetamol poisonings. The manuscript is well written and the structure of the paper is clear.

A quality of the study is the city-wide coverage of poisoning cases as well as the low rate of participants refusing participation.

The manuscript is quite long. One could for instance reduce the length, e.g. by repeating less of the numbers in the Result section that are already presented in the tables.

In the Discussion, it is mentioned that a large number of poisonings by substance abusers are treated in a separate EMA unit. Seemingly, these patients are not included in the current study – but how does this relate to the statement in the Method section that “Poisoned patients are not treated elsewhere”?

Please write out TCA first time the abbreviation is used. Also, UNODC does not seem to be explained in the text.

Did the EMCDDA or UNODC reports list regional figures for Oslo? Alternatively, it might not be possible to draw conclusions regarding opposite trends between those reports and the current local findings.

Pg. 16, please change ‘strongest predictor’ with ‘strongest known predictor’ for suicide.

A secondary finding is the large proportion of poisoning cases related to misuse who seemingly were discharged with no treatment options. Was there a difference in repetition rates with respect to intention, i.e. did persons who attempted suicide have a higher repetition rate than accidental overdoses with substances of abuse?

Please rephrase the following sentence: ‘The deaths in and outside hospital were clearly two different populations’ e.g. to ‘two distinctively different groups’.

A weakness of the study is that only older adolescents and adults are included (>16 years). It would have been preferable to also include younger adolescents.
who are known to have high rates of attempted suicide potentially due to poisonings with OTC drugs. This could be added to the limitations.

It would be useful if the title of Figures and Tables would indicate study period and population.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests